

Sudan. Until the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Iraq never had a suicide terrorist attack in all of its history. Between 1995 and 2004, the al Qaeda years, two-thirds of all attacks came from countries where the U.S. had troops stationed. Iraq's suicide missions today are carried out by Iraqi Sunnis and Saudis. Recall, 15 of the 19 participants of the 9/11 attacks were Saudis.

The clincher is this: the strongest motivation, according to Pape, is not religious but rather a desire "to compel modern democracies to withdraw military forces from the territory the terrorists view as their homeland."

The best news is that if stopping suicide terrorism is a goal we seek, a solution is available to us. Cease the occupation of foreign lands and the suicide missions will cease. Between 1982 and 1986, there were 41 suicide terrorist attacks in Lebanon. Once the U.S., the French, and Israel withdrew their forces from Lebanon, there were no more attacks. The reason the attacks stop, according to Pape, is that the Osama bin Ladens of the world no longer can inspire potential suicide terrorists despite their continued fanatical religious beliefs.

Pape is convinced after his extensive research that the longer and more extensive the occupation of Muslim territories, the greater the chance of more 9/11-type attacks on the U.S. He is convinced that the terrorists strategically are holding off hitting the U.S. at the present time in an effort to break up the coalition by hitting our European allies. He claims it is just a matter of time if our policies do not change.

It is time for us to consider a strategic reassessment of our policy of foreign interventionism, occupation, and nation-building. It is in our national interest to do so and in the interest of world peace.

□ 1515

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHENRY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

WITHDRAWAL FROM GAZA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, in the summer of 2000, President Clinton con-

vened a summit at Camp David with then Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat to seek a breakthrough in the peace process that had been moving forward in fits and starts since the signing of the Oslo Accords 7 years earlier.

As we all know, those talks ultimately broke down, despite the parties' being tantalizingly close to resolving many of the thorniest issues precluding a final status agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. Rather than build on the considerable progress that had been made at Camp David, Arafat unleashed a second intifada against Israel, a wave of terror that has lasted for nearly 5 years and cost thousands of lives.

Now, in just over a month, the Israeli government will begin the dismantlement and withdrawal of all 21 of its settlements in Gaza and four other settlements in the northern West Bank in a bold move designed to increase the prospects for bringing peace to both Israelis and Palestinians.

The decision to evacuate Gaza and part of the West Bank is the result of many months of agonizing debate within Israel. On the one hand, there are those who see any pullback by Israel without security guarantees or other tangible steps by the Palestinian Authority as a sign of weakness. The upcoming withdrawal, these Israelis say, will be cast by Hamas and other hardline Palestinian factions as a victory in much the same way that Israel's decision to withdraw its forces from Lebanon in May of 2000 allowed Hezbollah to proclaim itself the champion of the Arab fight against Israel. Other Israelis, led by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who was the architect of Israel's settlement policy after the 1967 Six Day War, have successfully argued that the disengagement will bolster Israel's security, that it represents Israel's seizing the initiative to alter the status quo with the Palestinians, and that it allows Israel to get its own lines of defense and that it will preempt toxic diplomatic initiatives by Arab and European states.

Ehud Olmert, the Likud mayor of Jerusalem, has also repeatedly discussed the importance of Israel's demographic security. The Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza is a fast-growing population that will soon be larger than that of Israel proper. For Israel to maintain a permanent presence in the territories would require the sacrifice of either Israel's status as a Jewish state or as a democracy.

For those of us who care deeply about Israel, Sharon and Olmert have laid out convincing reasons to support the disengagement plan while the opponents' arguments compel us to work with both Israel and the Palestinians to ensure that the evacuation is peaceful and that Hamas and other rejectionist elements are not in a position to take advantage of Israel's courage in seeking to change the dynamics on the ground.

I believe that the United States must be prepared to take a number of steps to make sure that this withdrawal enhances the chances for a lasting peace and puts the parties squarely back on the path towards realizing the President's roadmap for peace.

As a threshold matter, we must be prepared to help Israel absorb the economic costs associated with the dismantlement of the settlements and the resettlement of the approximately 8,000 Jewish settlers within Israel proper. Earlier this week, the Israeli government made an initial request for \$2.2 billion in assistance from the administration. I understand that the administration is studying the request, but we must be prepared to consider any eventual request quickly at the appropriate time.

We also have to work with other nations, members of the Quartet as well as others, to assist the Palestinian people and the government of Mahmoud Abbas to improve the lives of ordinary Palestinians in the wake of the withdrawal. Offering an alternative to destitution and death is one of the most effective tools we have to break the cycle of violence.

The U.S. has already pledged \$350 million in aid to the Palestinians, including \$200 million that was passed earlier this spring. I was pleased to see that our G-8 partners have pledged additional funds, totaling \$3 billion, at last week's Gleneagles summit. We must insist upon accountability to ensure these are properly spent alleviating poverty, providing employment, and developing institutions that respect the rule of law.

The U.S. must also redouble its efforts to choke off the flow of assistance to Hamas, the popular front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, Palestinian Islamic jihad, and other factions that oppose peace with Israel. Syria is a major focus of support for these groups and for Hezbollah, which is in Lebanon. Damascus must be made to understand that there is a price for its support of terrorism and that that price will only increase if it refuses to end that support.

Finally, we must also work to build peace between Israel and the Arab states of the Middle East. While Israel has peace treaties with both Egypt and Jordan, relations are not especially warm, and most of the rest of the Arab world remains in a technical state of war with Israel. We need to press our Arab friends to work towards a comprehensive peace with the Jewish state.

Mr. Speaker, we are at a remarkable moment in the search for peace in the Middle East, but the chance to build on Israel's decision to leave Gaza and the stirrings of democracy in the Arab world must not be allowed to slip away.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Miss McMORRIS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.